TL4682

Jakarta, 4 March 1999

Dear Mr Brereton,

First of all, may I offer my warm regards and express our appreciation of the active interest you have taken in finding a path towards a peaceful solution to the East Timor problem. We have been heartened also by the more active and positive role assumed by the Australian government in this regard.

I am concerned that the East Timorese position has not been clearly stated, and therefore would like to take this opportunity to clarify a number of points.

We have clearly identified two levels of violence in the territory which are being propagated in parallel with an entensive effort to build a Peace Movement towards Reconciliation in East Timor. These two levels are:
a) on-going military activity in spite of a current absence of offensives from either side and,
b) the terrorising of the population by four armed civilian groups: Mahidi, Aitarak, Besi Merah Putih and Halilintar.

They present themselves as defenders of integration within Indonesia and operate in the following areas:
Mahidi - Dili
Aitarak - Ainaro
Besi Merah Putih - Maubara/Lois
Halilintar - Maliana

All the above groups are openly campaigning for Autonomy. There is proof they have been armed by the military intelligence (SGI) to create the appearance of chaos, with the objective of sustaining the argument that a referendum and eventual independence will lead to civil war.

We are convinced that no consultation process can be carried out in the absence of true reconciliation amongst all East Timorese leading to genuine Peace in the territory and peace of mind for the people.

We are concerned that such armed groups are continuing their criminal activities with impunity. Furthermore, no efforts is being made to put an immediate end to such violence.

This situation which is no longer within the control of the Indonesian authorities is reason enough to reaffirm our demand that a UN Peace Mission be immediately sent to East Timor.

The activities carried out by the armed civilian groups to destabilize East Timor are restricted to the Western border as if to create a zone of instability.

There is an urgent need for the immediate deployment of a UN Police Force in the territory to prepare and monitor talks on the establishment of a cease-fire and to proceed with the disarmament of FALINTIL and those East Timorese serving ABRI, including the paramilitary groups, and to monitor the simultaneous withdrawal of ABRI. Only this will guarantee that a consultation process can be conducted without fear of coercion of any kind.
The UN Police Force will also function to select people from both factions to be trained as the unarmed East Timorese Police Force which will be deployed throughout the territory to ensure the smooth running of the consultation process..

We stress that without an immediate UN presence in East Timor, all our efforts towards reconciliation and in preparation for the consultation process will be in vain.

We would, therefore, appreciate your continuing to campaign for the immediate deployment of a UN Police Force accompanied, if possible, by a small military contingent. In view of the gradual disruption of the supply to East Timor of essential goods, particularly rice and medicines, we would also urge Australian and international agencies to begin to provide urgent humanitarian assistance.

We trust that you will continue to monitor developments inside East Timor and to support our efforts to bring long-lasting Peace to our Motherland.

Yours sincerely

Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão
President of the C.N.R.T.